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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY

Poland

SUBJECT

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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1. there were no restrictions of a legal nature on listening to foreign radio broadcasts. Although no one made a practice of talking publicly about his habits of listening to foreign broadcasts, such an admission was not by itself dangerous. The Communist regime relies on technical interference (jamming) rather than on legal or police restrictions in its program of keeping news from the free world from the Polish people.
2. Technically, the reception of VOA and RFE broadcasts would be better than that of any other foreign program (not counting Radio Moscow) if it were not for jamming. The BBC signal was not quite so strong as that of the U.S.-sponsored broadcasts, but it was quite good. Although the signal of Radio Ankara was not so strong as the afore-mentioned stations, it was received much better on news broadcasts, which were never jammed. Paris (Radio Diffusion Francaise) came in fairly well; there was little jamming. Radio Madrid could be well received, as long as it broadcast in Hungarian. The Polish program was completely jammed and could not be heard with the prevailing receivers. Vatican Radio could be heard in Lodz, but not very well.
3. Interest in foreign broadcasts was very widespread, particularly in straight newscasts. practically every owner of a radio set capable of picking up foreign stations listened to foreign news. Interest centered on RFE because it had the longest broadcast schedule. VOA was next in line of interest. Radio Madrid had the reputation of being the best station for information content, but it was completely jammed. Broadcasts from Paris were of some interest because Polish emigres sometimes sent personal greetings over that station.

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50X1-HUM

- 2 -
SECRET

4. Except for Ankara, practically all the foreign broadcasts from free countries were subject to varying degrees of jamming. [redacted] referring to short-wave broadcasts in the Polish language. The effectiveness of jamming varied with atmospheric conditions and of course with the nature of the broadcast (a newscast of 11:15 was more completely jammed than a music program from Paris), but not so much with the content of the individual broadcast. The signals of BBC and VOA were so strong that most of their broadcasts could be received in spite of jamming, although not every word could be clearly understood. How effective jamming could be was shown in the example of Radio Madrid. [redacted] on the English program of that station and received it as clearly as I could have wished; the minute the Polish program commenced, that is right after station identification, it became impossible to understand a single sentence.

50X1-HUM

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5. [redacted] One out of five [redacted] had a receiver capable of picking up foreign broadcasts on short waves. Small receivers which are hooked up with the local station can be bought for as little as one hundred zloty, but few people own them. A few sets of Czechoslovak manufacture are available for long and medium wave reception only. Most of the sets [redacted] could receive long, medium, and short wave broadcasts, including all major foreign stations. Of the radio sets manufactured abroad, Phillips and Telefunken predominated; the number of these sets still in good condition is steadily decreasing because it is impossible to get tubes of US or UK or practically any other foreign manufacture. Polish and some German sets, however, are easily repaired and kept in operating condition. There are three types of sets of Polish manufacture which have a short wave band and thus permit reception of foreign broadcasts: (a) The AGA sets are the best; (b) Pioneer is not of quite the same quality, [redacted]

50X1-HUM

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(c) Hamur is the least desirable of these radio receivers and presumably is no match for intense jamming. [redacted]

50X1-HUM

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